THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Saturday, the 7th January 1950.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at eleven of the clock, Mr. President (THE HON. SRI R. B. RAMAKRISHNA RAJU) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Import of "Kesari Dhall."

* 81 *Q.*—SRI B. BHIMA RAO: Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the prohibition on the import of "Kesari Dhall" into this Province has been removed, and if so, when;

(*b*) whether, in spite of the removal of the ban, the Public Health authorities are launching prosecutions against those that import it in the district of Bellary;

(*c*) if so, what the reasons therefor are; and

(*d*) whether the Government have or have not sent instructions to the concerned authorities not to launch such prosecutions?

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN:—"(*a*) The ban on the import of Kesari-gram and its products in this Province was lifted with effect from 27th July 1948.

"(*b*) *to* (*d*) The Press note issued on this subject on 28th October 1949 will explain the position. A copy [a] of this note is placed on the table of the House."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO:—"Are the Government aware that in the Province of Bombay, merchants are importing considerable quantities of this product and preparing every day something in the shops for sale without any objection whatsoever?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN:—"It may be so, Sir, in the Bombay Province, but we are not bound by the actions of that Province in regard to this matter."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO:—"Have this Government corresponded with the Government of Bombay and ascertained their views as to how they are allowing this product to be imported and consumed, while it has been prohibited in this Province?"

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN:—"I do not know, Sir, whether it is right or proper for one Provincial Government to address another Government on a subject in which we have made special investigation and found that that product contains poison and have ordered correctly that it should not be imported into this Province."

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[a] Printed as Appendix I on page 1023 infra.

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SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Was any chemical test or analysis made of these products, which showed that they are deleterious to public health? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" That product was examined by our Chemical Analyst, Sir, and it was found that it is poisonous if it is taken in sufficient quantity and so, in the interests of the public health of this Province, we have banned its importation into this Province."

DR. SYED TAJUDDIN :—" What is the nature of the poison that is contained in it, Sir? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" I do not know the details, Sir. If the hon. Member wants it to be known, and if he gives me time, I shall get the required information for him. But I know that people have died out of it. What that particular poison is, I am not in a position to say at present. If the hon. Member wants, I shall call for and furnish the information to him."

DR. SYED TAJUDDIN :—" Because a number of people had died by taking this deleterious product, do not the Government think it worth while to investigate and find out the nature of the poison contained in it? "

THE HON. DR. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" I said that the Government have investigated it and found out that it contained some poison. If only the hon. Member gives me time, I shall go into the files and find out what that particular poison is and give the information to the hon. Member."

The Ramapadasagar Project.

* 82 *Q.*—SRI B. BHIMA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the execution of the Ramapadasagar Project has been abandoned, and if so, for what reasons;

(*b*) the expenditure incurred hitherto on the investigation of the project showing details about (i) the amount spent for sending local Engineers to America and other countries; (ii) the expenditure incurred for the Engineers from America and other countries coming and inspecting and submitting their report; (iii) the other items of expenditure incurred; (iv) the total estimated cost of the project—the area to be irrigated and the quantities of foodgrains in tons to be got under the scheme; and

(*c*) whether the report submitted by the American Engineers on the project will be laid on the table of the House?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (*a*) No. But the execution of the Project is being delayed because the Government of India and this Government are unable to find the money, equipment and man-power immediately.

" (*b*) The approximate amount of total commitments so far made on account of the investigation of the Ramapadasagar including provision made in the Budget Estimate for 1949–50